

INVALID COOPERATIVES IN THE  
U.S.S.R.

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# Invalid Cooperatives

*In the U. S. S. R.*

**S**Ocial INSURANCE in the U. S. S. R. is dealt with by the People's Commissariats of Social Maintenance which carry on the responsible work of providing for the invalids of the world war and the civil war; for their families, for widows and orphans, and also for aged people, for the blind, the deaf-and-dumb, and for people completely or partially disabled. The People's Commissariat of Social Maintenance not only provides relief to all contingents of people coming under its administration, but also provides with jobs invalids and organizes their work. In 1920-21 the organs of Social Maintenance set up 170 work-shops, and started to train invalids in experimental model schools at different courses and work-shops. All this, however, was not sufficient to meet the tremendous demands of invalids eager to participate in Socialist construction. This wish on the part of invalids to work found its formulation in a special decree promulgated by the Government of the R. S. F. S. R. on December 8, 1921.

This decree laid the foundations for the invalid cooperatives as an independent economic organization designed to organize invalid labour on a mass scale, in town and country.

**THIS GOVERNMENT** decree regarding invalid cooperatives granted to artels of invalids the right to organize both industrial and trading enterprises. All such enterprises organized by an artel of invalids were exempted from all State taxes and dues. The extensive privileges granted to the invalid artels enabled them to establish a number of industrial and trading enterprises with a small initial outlay. At the same time, the organs of Social Maintenance displayed vigorous initiative in setting up new artels throughout the country and subsidizing them.

In the budgets of the organs of Social Maintenance considerable sums were provided to be loaned unconditionally to cooperatives of invalids for the organization of new artels and the extension of the existing ones. Having begun its work with a few small detached industrial and trading enterprises, the invalid cooperatives have at present become a mighty cooperative system caring for 218,000 invalids and with a turnover of over 3,500 million roubles a year.

**ALL THE** artels of a given region, province or an autonomous republic are centralized in their respective union of invalid cooperatives. All the regional, provincial or autonomous unions of the invalid cooperatives unite to form the All-Russian Soviet of Invalid Cooperatives, known as the

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"Vsekoopinsovet." The nucleus of this union is the artel. Invalid artels may, in accordance with the law, employ hired labour to the amount of 20 per cent of their membership to perform work which the invalids cannot do owing to their impaired physical condition.

The Artels fall under the following heads: industrial, trading, public feeding, and of home work.

By January 1, 1939, the invalid cooperatives of the R.S.F.S.R. comprised 1715 artels with 218,000 members, and, including those employed in hired labour, numbered 252,000 people.

Besides the invalid cooperatives a considerable number of invalids are assisted in finding employment in State enterprises and institutions.

The practice of setting invalids to work through the agency of artels has proved that the artel form is the most suitable to invalids of different classes.

**IN THE** invalid artels, where the workers are all people of limited labour capacity, special norms of work are established that are within the range of their ability, and a suitable labour regime is arranged.

The long years' experience of the invalid cooperatives has shown that in creating favourable conditions for the labour and every-day life of the members, their labour improves in efficiency and their material situation is not lower than that of healthy workers.

The program of the Third Five-Year Plan provides for a further growth of production of invalid cooperatives in all branches of their economic activities.

Thus, the production program which in 1937, the last year of the Second Five-Year Plan, reached 1263.8 million roubles, will in 1942, the last year of the Third Five-Year Plan, reach 2400 million roubles, which means an increase of 102.1 per cent. The trade turnover will rise proportionately from 976 million in 1937 to 2,000 million in 1942.

The general economic program of the invalid cooperative system will in the last year of the Third Five-Year Plan reach 5,200 million roubles.

The basic idea permeating the working of the invalid cooperative is the care shown to the invalids and towards the improvement of their material con-



scout camp—was some time in coming. Its first prophecy of fulfillment did not take place at "Onawandah" but at the Y. W. C. A. Camp at Harvey's Lake. Six members of the troop, sponsored by the troop committee, attended this camp in the summer of 1937 for five days. They were glorious days crowned with success. The girls participated in all camp activities. Two received "swimming pins" at camp-fire on their last evening; all proved to be extremely adaptable, making friends readily, and to all appearances simply disregarded, so far as was humanly possible, the thought that they were in any way different from the other campers.

A long time before this, however, a number of scouts had been able to enter normal Girl Scout troops due to the training they had had in the extension troops. Those who came to the meetings in the Y. W. C. A. were encouraged to make the trip whenever possible without transportation facilities provided for extension troop members, as a means of promoting self-reliance.

**REPORTS FOR 1938** contain two main highlights.

One was that all members of the Brownie Pack and Girl Scout Extension Troop who were able to compete with normal girls were allowed to attend the regular sessions at Camp Onawandah. These girls were selected by Dr. Smith. Those who were unable to go to "Onawandah" were assigned to Camp Wildwood at Harvey's Lake, a beautiful lakeside estate presented to the Girl Scouts of Wyoming Valley Council a few years ago by Mr. F. J. Weckesser of Wilkes-Barre.

Twenty-one Brownies and Girl Scouts went to "Onawandah" last summer. Fifteen children, including four who were not Girl Scouts, went to Wildwood. The very absence of detailed reports in regard to the first group proves their complete absorption into the normal life of the camp. A letter from Mrs. Velasco to the camp director, written in August, says: "The enthusiasm of the children returning from camp this year has been most apparent and all seemed to have greatly improved physically."

**NO BETTER** picture can be drawn of the Wildwood Camp than that included in the reports of those who looked after their welfare: Mrs. Gertrude P. Hansen, R.N., and Miss Esther Helfrich, director of the camp, who for years has been a Girl Scout leader.

Mrs. Hansen states in part:

"At 10 a. m. on August 8, 1938, fifteen happy, smiling children, members of Extension Troop 3, left Kirby Memorial Health Center for a ten-day outing at Camp Wildwood. This was their first experience at Wildwood and they surely were a curious, happy crowd.

"Arriving at Wildwood the children were assigned to their respective rooms. Four of the least handicapped were permitted to bunk in the barn" (made over into sleeping quarters). "These children stayed

at the house all day, only traveling back and forth once a day.

"About two hours after arriving at camp everything was in order; beds made and lunch ready. Following lunch the children began their regular program; a nap, a swim, and at Scouting time they were separated into three patrols, each one with a Junior Counsellor in charge. The Camp Kapers were assigned for the following day. Each child accepted her task as a matter of fact; there was no dissension whatever. . . .

"The children worked always to the rhythm of songs taught by their Junior Counsellors, no matter whether they were washing dishes, sweeping up their rooms or preparing vegetables. The director, Miss Helfrich, and the Junior Counsellors . . . marvelled many times at their sunny dispositions and their independence. They marvelled most at the fact that the children were able to enter into every activity during camp-fire programs, even to the Folk Dances . . .

"They learned very quickly and were most responsive; more so . . . than the average child in a normal group . . .

"Only once (in the report) have the children been referred to as 'handicapped.' I did not consider them as such and encouraged them always in carrying on a normal program. The only difficulty was in restricting them from trying to be too normal."

**MISS HELFRICH'S** report of Wildwood's first encampment for handicapped girls says:

"I found the underprivileged children to be most active, alert and ever ready to attempt and enter into all activities offered . . .

"An hour and a half rest period was given daily during which time most of the girls slept, and some read, but all were required to get into bed and keep silence.

"A daily sun cure was taken on blankets, either on the lawn or the dock. As a result all campers returned home with a healthier color.

"As usual the most popular period was swimming. Under the capable supervision of Miss Lois Smith who was assisted by a corps of Life Savers, one to each camper, every scout advanced in swimming. What these handicapped children were able to do in the water was quite amazing."

The second important event of last year was the formation of an Extension Troop Committee whose members carry on all of the actual work associated with the troops. The Girl Scout organization acts in an advisory way, the committee conferring with it from time to time for guidance and instruction.

Just what the next wish for the extension troops of Wyoming Valley Council may be is not known at the present time. Whatever the Future Wish may be one may be sure that if it is a Good Wish the sponsors of the troop will go into action and make it come true.

ditions. Light, spacious premises, proper organization of labour, an appropriate alignment of working forces with due regard for the degree of disablement and the state of health of each member of the artel, are conditions obligatory for any enterprise where invalid labour is employed.

INVALID COOPERATIVES have of late begun to organize the labour of invalids by providing them with work to be done at home.

The chief kind of work of this type of artel, is the making of knitted goods, embroidery, painting of fabrics, artificial flowers etc., i.e. such forms of manual work which can be done under home conditions.

In Moscow, during the last year alone, 4,000 invalids of this class were organized and produced artistic goods of superior quality to the value of 10 million roubles.

This form of invalid labour organisation within the system of invalid cooperatives has a great future before it. The "Artistic Handicraft" Artel unites approximately 1,700 invalids. The ages of the members range from 55 to 80 years. Besides their pension, the invalids working at home earn up to 200 roubles a month.

The home-work artels do great good in supplying with work those who in virtue of old age, or invalidity cannot engage in their former profession or work in the shops of the artels.

In the invalid cooperative system there are now working about 5,000 blind who are organised in special artels. The production of large artels of the blind is counted in millions of roubles. The artel of the blind in Leningrad for example unites 800 people. In Moscow in a well-equipped plant, belonging to the "EMOS" artel, the blind manufacture complex appliances—electric low velocity motors, fans and electrical pumps. The artel of the blind in Rostov-on-Don produces wicker furniture for sanatoria and rest homes.

**THE LABOUR** efficiency of a blind person, is in some industries not lower than that of workers with normal vision. A striking example is the work of blind Stakhanovites in the invalid artels who exceed their norms by several times. Closely united in a harmonious labour corporation, the blind feel themselves to be useful members of society and participants in Socialist construction.

The blind have elaborated many inventions and have introduced a number of rationalisation methods into their work. A blind person who cannot see the details of his instrument, but only senses them detects by a touch of unusual keenness the least unevenness or irregularity.

Thus, for instance there were 87 rationalisation proposals made by the blind and utilised in production in the "EMOS" artel during a period of six months.

There is much that is instructive in the life of

some of the members of the "EMOS" artels for the blind. Fedor Vanin is 42 years old. Before the revolution he was employed by a landowner as an unskilled labourer. The world war of 1914-18 deprived him of his eyesight; at present Vanin is a skilled turner on metal and earns over 500 roubles a month.

Mihail Tsutskarev lost his eyesight at the age of seven. He is now 30 years old. He has graduated from a workers' faculty, is a skilled fitter and has been elected deputy to the Moscow Soviet.

Alexandra Rakhmanova was before the Revolution a domestic servant and illiterate. She is now a cultured, intelligent woman. She has received prizes several times for good work and rationalisation proposals.

Many of the members of the artels of the blind could tell a similar story of their life. Organised in an artel, they work and study harmoniously, improving their material situation and their political and cultural standards.

**THE BLIND** have their own literature, newspapers and magazines in the Braille system. Besides their economic work, the invalid cooperatives devote a great deal of attention to the social and living conditions of their members. Mutual aid and insurance societies have been organised for this purpose, whose tasks and work have been conducted along different lines at different times. During the first years of their existence, their tasks were limited to making loans and giving monetary assistance to such members of the artel as needed it. But with the growth of the cooperatives, the task of the mutual aid societies also changed. In the budget of these mutual aid societies, 15 per cent of the sum paid off in wages to the artel members is written off to cover various items of expenses pertaining to the domestic needs of members. For the period from 1926 to 1936, these societies sent to sanatoria and rest homes 120,000 members of the artel, and placed 100,000 children of members in kindergartens and in young pioneer camps in the summer. The expenditures for these items reached a total of 110 million roubles.

Twenty per cent of the members of the artel are sent yearly to health resorts, sanatoria and rest homes, the expenses being covered by the above mentioned mutual aid and insurance societies.

The 1939 budget of the latter amounts to 65 million roubles. This sum is to be spent on the upkeep of six sanatoria with an annual admission capacity of 5310 people; of 13 rest homes with places for 20,200 people yearly; of 85 kindergartens and creches for 3,285 children and over 270 out-patient hospitals and medical stations.

**BESIDES GIVING** their members medical aid, and sending them when required to sanatoria, these societies perform the functions of social insurance. In case of illness, members of the artel receive sick benefit from these organs.

(Cont'd on Page 84)



# Come to Dallas Oct. 22-25

**D**ALLAS WILL be at its best, both in climate and in entertainment resources, when the National Society for Crippled Children holds its annual convention in the Southwestern metropolis October 22-25.

Climatically, October is the most delightful season of the year in Dallas. Dallas' Indian Summer period, late October has a tang in the air, a constant breeze, warm days—but not too warm, and cool evenings. Autumn foliage, with its riot of color, even shames Springtime in Texas. The sun shines from unclouded skies, and Texans spend every leisure moment out of doors.

In entertainment resources, this is also a rich season in Dallas. The season's change has added zest to social life and amusements, and Dallas is fully occupied with the role it has had for more than four generations—that of entertainment and recreational center for the people of the great Southwest.

**THE CONVENTION** will begin on the closing day of the fifty-first annual State Fair of Texas, the biggest annual exposition in America.

Early arrivals for the convention will want to spend considerable time at the State Fair. Even those who do not reach Dallas until October 22, will want to plan a visit to the Fair on its closing day. The State Fair is the show window of Texas—a concentrated picture of agriculture, livestock, industry, culture and amusements in America's empire region. The Fair occupies a \$15,000,000 permanent exposition plant, and annually attracts a 15-day total attendance of approximately 1,000,000 visitors.

In addition to its great agricultural and livestock show and its industrial exhibits, the State Fair will be the setting for three of the Southwest's outstanding 1939 season football games, to be played on successive Saturdays in the 46,000-seat Cotton Bowl. The Fair's Midway will provide all the entertainment expected at an exposition, and the famous Folies Bergere will be presented in the auditorium for that period.

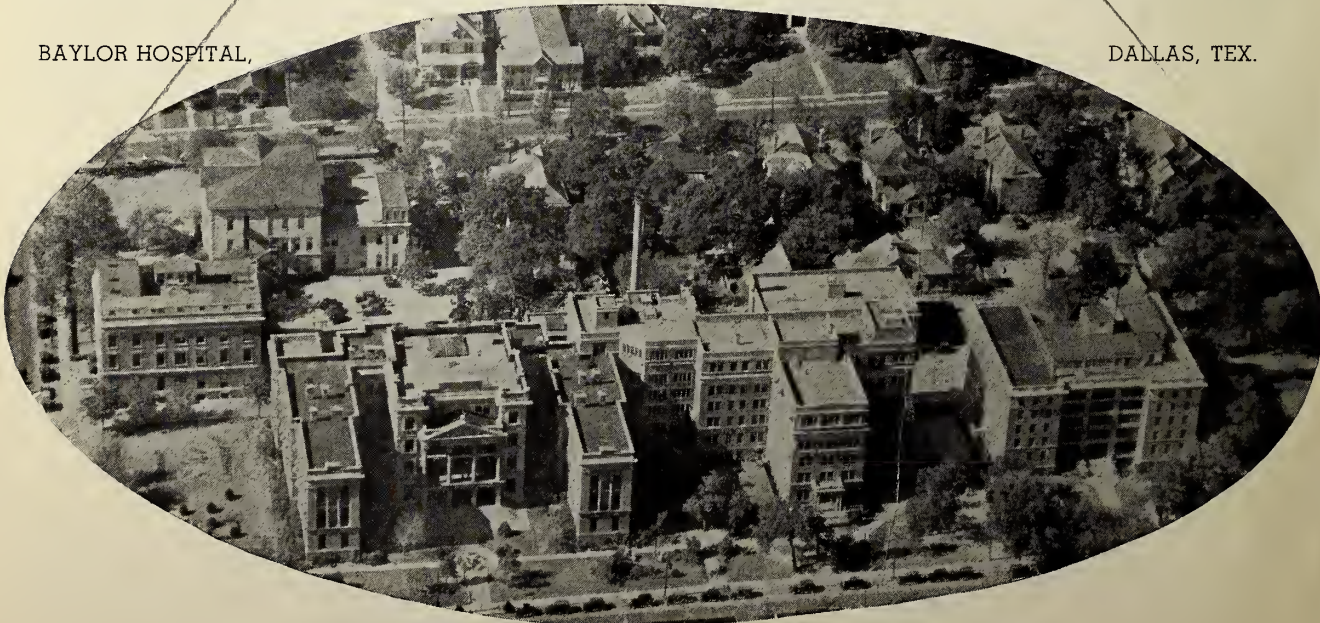
**WITH** A more cosmopolitan outlook and a wider range in amusement tastes than most cities of its size, Dallas is able to provide almost any type of entertainment the visitor may desire. Its 38 theaters; its nationally famous Little Theatre, which won the Belasco Cup in national competition three years in succession; its smart restaurants and night clubs a half dozen of which have "big name" dance orchestras; and its universities, schools and museums will all be of special interest to the convention visitors.

Dallas is the home of Southern Methodist University and of the Colleges of Medicine and Dentistry and the School of Nursing of Baylor University. Dallas is the dominant medical and hospital center of the entire Southwest. In addition to the Scottish Rite Hospital for Crippled Children, Dallas' other excellent hospital and medical facilities, including several internationally famous clinics, such as the Carrell-Girard Clinic, will hold the attention of delegates to the convention.

The 7,025 acres of municipal parks and playgrounds include two big lakes, White Rock and

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—Rose Ulrich

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with all the physiotherapy, occupational and vocational training experts, that are necessary to adequately equip crippled children for their future vocations.

**C**RIPPLED CHILDREN Societies have now been at work for about three years. They originated with Rotary and the New Zealand Crippled Children Society and its 15 Branches have listed and examined about 2,000 crippled children. The funds of the Society are derived partly from a Government subsidy of about \$4,000 per annum and partly from the interest on handsome gifts, totalling not less than \$25,000 made by Lord Nuffield of Oxford—the magnificent benefactor of numerous gifts to British and Colonial hospitals and crippled children objectives. The Auckland Branch of the New Zealand Crippled Children Society covers an area of about 500 miles by 100 miles, and has established Local Auxiliary Committees in each County, Borough or City District. Almost all of the work of the Crippled Children Society is done in an honorary capacity, and a great deal of progress has been made in the past three years.

In 1938, I had the privilege of attending the annual meeting of the International Society for Crippled Children at Cleveland, and am extremely grateful for the courtesies shown to me, my wife and daughter by its President, Mr. Paul King and all the

officers of the International Society. We, of this little country, realize how great is the specialization in crippled children work in your great country, and how it will take many years to reach this standard in small countries. We do wish the International Society the greatest possible success in the work for crippled children.

## VOCATIONAL TRAINING

(Cont'd from Page 69)

in 1921 it was 36 years of age and now is 28 years of age. Much can be said for and against the youthfulness of rehabilitants. The fact remains that enduring rehabilitation begins with youth. Rehabilitation for man and his environment is the order of the day and tomorrow the older man will be reached as our rehabilitation consciousness broadens and deepens.

**VOCATIONAL TRAINING** is the important link or keystone in the process of rehabilitation. Vocational training for the crippled child is rehabilitation. Rehabilitation has accepted the challenge of Article Ten of the Crippled Child's Bill of Rights.

Not only for its own sake, but for the benefit of society as a whole, every crippled child has the right to the best body which modern science can help it to secure; the best mind which modern education can provide; the best training which modern vocational guidance can give; the best position in life which its physical condition, perfected as best it may be, will permit; and the best opportunity for spiritual development which its environment affords.

## INVALID COOPERATIVES

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In case he or she becomes totally disabled, a member of an artel who has worked in it for a definite length of time, receives from the mutual aid and insurance society, in addition to the pension he already gets from the state, a further benefit, to bring the total amount up to his average earnings.

Among the many tasks incumbent upon the mutual aid and insurance societies, an important one is that of controlling, with a view to its proper utilization, the labour of invalids and the labour safety measures in the enterprises of the artel.

To fulfil their tasks, these mutual aid societies have an organisational system of their own. The lowest link of these societies is the insurance bureau of the artel which is elected by a general meeting of the members; the second and higher link is the mutual aid society of the region, province or republic; these are in their turn united in the All-Union Mutual Aid and Insurance Society.

This outline of the working of invalid cooperatives and their welfare organisations will give some idea of how invalids do their share in Soviet industry.

the Society is a very vital part of the rehabilitation of the 1,600 children under the Society's care.

On August 25, twenty-two necessitous children will be transported by cars for the thirty-mile drive out of Sydney to this wonderful farm of twenty-six productive acres where everything awaits them for health-giving happiness.

Beverly Park Leagues are in the process of formation to support the home. The one at Campbelltown has eighty members and has already reised £150. Having helped furnish the dormitories, this League is now planning to build a large additional playroom for the children. Another League is financing the farm irrigation scheme.

A tapestry exhibition recently held in Sydney at McDowells Ltd. through the interest of Mr. Frank MacDowell (Rotarian) and his wife, resulted in £60 for Beverly Park. The Exhibition was one of rare quality.

## BOOK REVIEWS

**NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL DEGENERATION.** Weston A. Price, M. S., D. D. S., F. A. C. D. Paul B. Hoeber, Inc., New York. 1939.

In this well written and well illustrated volume, Dr. Price has presented the evidence to support his hypothesis that people who live under primitive conditions have enjoyed excellent teeth. It is the contention of this author that the human race, as civilization has advanced, has physically retrogressed. According to Dr. Price, this degeneration has resulted from the dietary of civilized man. The examples which he has selected do show marked inferiority in the teeth, and in the development of the mouths of individuals who have lived on the fringes of civilization, as compared with others of the same tribe or family who continue to live in an environment removed from civilization influences.

These studies or observations have been conducted in every part of the world including Europe, Asia, Africa and the Islands of the South Seas. Photographic evidence has been obtained among the isolated and modernized African tribes, the Aborigines of Australia, the Maoris of New Zealand, the Eskimos and Indians of North and South America. Through photographs and text, Dr. Price has attempted to show the progressive decline of modern civilization.

The possibility that crippling, both congenital and that due to infections, may result from the debility of malnutrition is also suggested.

The conclusion of Dr. Price that primitive races suffer less from dental caries and facial deformities than do those of civilized countries appears to be reasonably well established.

Although many will not be willing to accept all of the statements contained in this book, all of those who read it with a critical mind will be stimulated by it.

—Edward L. Compere, M. D.

**SPORTS FOR THE HANDICAPPED.** George T. Stafford, Ed. D. Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1939.

The author of *SPORTS FOR THE HANDICAPPED* is

an Associate Professor of Physical Education at the University of Illinois and has for some time been interested in recreation for the handicapped. The philosophy underlying the book is the philosophy of modern education—that "education should be concerned . . . with the whole life of the student." Before planning a recreational program for an atypical person, Dr. Stafford advises that a thorough study be made of the person, his physical abilities, disabilities, likes, dislikes, reactions to various sports, and so forth, in order that a program best fitted to the particular needs of that one person may be made.

It is the author's belief also that through sports a handicapped individual may often be led to use the more formal exercises that are necessary, sometimes, to correct a physical condition. Frequently, a healthier, more normal emotional adjustment is made through sports by those who have shunned society and have withdrawn into themselves because of their handicaps.

Based upon his broad knowledge of sports and the various types of handicaps people suffer, Dr. Stafford has outlined athletic games, combative sports, dances, individual athletics and stunts, relays, aquatic sports and miscellaneous sports that can be used by the handicapped. These lists should be of valuable aid to those who are looking for such recreational activities.

The bibliographies in the book are also excellent guides for those seeking information on the handicapped, sports, and various diseases and their treatments.

The book deserves a place on the bookshelves of everyone interested in the recreational problems of a handicapped person and fills a long felt need.

—Olive P. Bruner.

## NEW ZEALAND CRIPPLED CHILDREN

(Cont'd from Page 66)

New Zealand at the primary and secondary levels has been free for more than 30 years. In recent years we have had a Government Correspondence School for those unable to leave their homes, and teachers are provided in most of the public hospitals. Crippled children are therefore able to get an education side by side with other children, and if they are unable to reside near a school which they desire to attend, the local Branch of the New Zealand Crippled Children Society usually finds the funds necessary to pay for lodging and school expenses. In this way, every crippled child can get the education calculated to fit him best for his chosen vocation in life.

**NEW ZEALAND** has not as yet any occupational therapy established in any centre. It will need homes, where occupational therapy and physiotherapy as well as vocational training are provided. Auckland is particularly grateful for a bequest, subject at present to a life interest, but available at a future date, of not less than \$250,000 for the establishment of a crippled children home. Consequently, at a later date Auckland will have a convalescent home



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